



**METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 5a**

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***Memorandum***

TO: Legislation Committee

DATE: May 2, 2008

FR: Executive Director

RE: Federal Transportation Authorization Timeline

The upcoming federal Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget that begins on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 is under development now. Also, it is the last year of SAFETEA legislation that became law on August 10, 2005.

In ordinary circumstances, we could expect a full authorization proposal from the Administration with an expected term of several years to be available at this juncture. However, we do not expect this action to take place and instead we are likely to start the authorization discussion anew with the incoming administration in January 2008.

Below is a federal transportation authorization estimated timeline of key actions. It is important to note that there are many variables that will alter the timeline — none more so than the 2008 elections. The timeline below represents what we consider the mid-point of potential ‘end dates’. It is difficult to see how a new transportation bill will be in place before SAFETEA expires on September 30, 2009 given procedural actions and policy debates that need to take place. Conversely, since the Highway Trust Fund is approaching a zero balance, some kind of action is needed relatively quickly if Congress is to avoid significant cuts to the nation’s transportation programs.

To be sure, next year is likely to be dynamic in the federal transportation policy arena, especially given the bold recommendations contained in the final report from the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission.

**TIMELINE**

***January, 2008***

National Commission releases its report  
House Committee hearings

***Spring, 2008***

House and Senate hearings on selected transportation authorization issues

***Summer/Fall, 2008***

Bush Administration publishes authorization position papers

***November, 2008***

Presidential election  
House and Senate elections

***December, 2008***

New administration transition teams include transportation policy development and appointing new Secretary of Transportation

***January, 2009***

President sworn in  
Secretary of Transportation nominated

***February-May, 2009***

Congress organizes  
The Administration organizes  
The Senate approves the Presidential nominees

***Spring-Summer, 2009***

Hill hearings continue  
New administration officially weighs in with draft authorization proposal

***Late Spring, 2009***

Draft authorization bills begin to emerge

***Early Summer, 2009***

Subcommittee markups in House

***Mid-Summer, 2009 (prior to summer recess)***

Full committee markups House/Senate

***Fall, 2009***

House passes reauthorization/Senate begins debate

***September 30th, 2009***

End of SAFETEA authorization; if new bill not yet passed, extension of current programs must be enacted

***Fall, 2009***

Senate passes transportation bill

***Fall-Winter, 2009***

First possible conference committee

Later this year, we will seek policy positions from the Commission so that we can effectively engage with Bay Area legislators who are in a strong position to influence the nation's transportation policy during the upcoming years.

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Steve Heminger